FOREWORD

I have much pleasure in writing this foreword to the volume commemorating twenty-five years of research at the Edward Percival Field Station. The Field Station, initially called the Edward Percival Marine Laboratory, was originally established to provide a facility for the conduct of field courses for zoology students. This carried on a tradition established by the late Professor Edward Percival of introducing students in their second year to the diversity of marine, freshwater and terrestrial life and to the ecological principles derived from studying the structure and functioning of the communities found in these habitats. However, right from the beginning the laboratory served as a base for research carried out by the staff and students of the Department. Increasingly over the years it has also served the research needs, not only of zoologists, but those of other University Departments, in particular Botany, Geography, Geology and more recently Chemistry. In addition a wide range of visiting scientists, both from within New Zealand and overseas, have taken advantage of the facilities provided to carry out a diverse range of recent projects.

Few laboratories in the world have such a unique setting. The Peninsula marks a transition zone between elements of northern and southern flora and fauna, e.g. it is the one place in New Zealand where all five species of intertidal limpets coexist. It is famed for the richness of its seaweed flora. There is an extensive range of intertidal platforms and reefs with varied exposure to wave action. The waters offshore are a complex mixture of sub-antarctic, subtropical and coastal water masses. Off the Peninsula there is a complex submarine canyon system with deep water occurring within a few kilometers of the coast. The Kowhai Bush has provided an accessible and unique environment for research on New Zealand nature bird species, while the near-by mountain range give opportunities for work on a transect from the snowline to sea-level over a distance of a few kilometers. A number of streams and small lakes extends the research opportunities into freshwater habitats.

A large number of students have carried out research for their B.Sc. (Hons), M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees at the laboratory. These students now hold positions in a wide range of university and government departments and research institutes, both in New Zealand and overseas. To them the field station and its surroundings provided research material, facilities for laboratory experimentation, and a work environment that was unique. The volumes of collected reprints distributed from the field station and the list of publications in the appendix to this volume are witness both to the value and quality of the research carried out. The titles of papers published in this number give an indication of the variety

of current research centred on the field station.

All those who have participated in the establishment and development of the field station can look back in pride at an impressive record of accomplishment. With the establishment of the new research wing the station now enters a new and even more promising era.

George A. Knox.